GAKU TSUGANO
NAGARU TANIGAWA
CHARACTERS BY:
NOIZI ITO

...I'LL DO IT!
I'VE WORKED REALLY HARD!
I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU TELL ME TO DO!
EVEN IF YOU TELL ME TO CATCH THE MOON'S REFLECTION IN THE WATER...
THE SOS BRIGADE'S THE ONLY CLUB I'M TRYING OUT FOR!
...COULD SHE BE A FIFTH POWER...?
THIS FRESHMAN WITH HER HARUHI-LEVEL FITNESS...
BAM BAM
α—9

© The Surprise of Haruhi Suzumiya VII

ORIGINAL STORY
NAGARU TANIGAWA
MANGA
GAKU TSUGANO
CHARACTER DESIGN:
NOIZI ITO
19
THE MELANCHOLY OF
HARUHI SUZUMIYA

CONTENTS

The Surprise of Haruhi Suzumiya VII 001
The Surprise of Haruhi Suzumiya VIII 039
The Surprise of Haruhi Suzumiya IX 073
The Surprise of Haruhi Suzumiya X 107
The Surprise of Haruhi Suzumiya XI 139

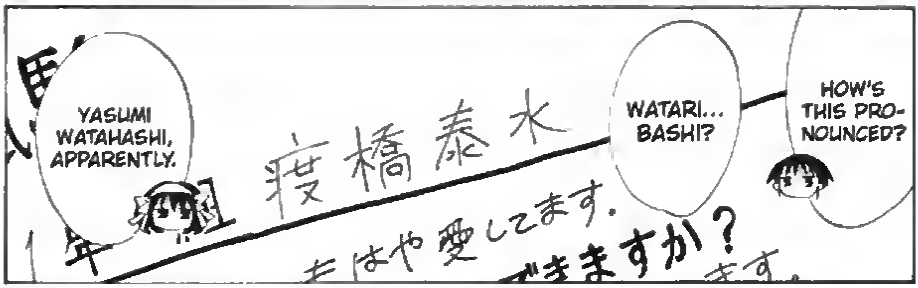
PEKKORI (BOW)
I'LL BE GOING HOME FOR TODAY, THEN!
SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW!
BYE!
TAN (TMP)
MY, BUT SHE'S CHARM-ING.
BATAN (SLAM)
QUITE A CHEERFUL GIRL...
...WOULDN'T YOU SAY?

There's nothing to worry about.
There won't be any problems with her.
You should be happy to have a cute new junior member.
She seems like she'll be quite good at running errands.
DO YOU SERIOUSLY THINK THAT?
I'M POSITIVE I'VE NEVER MET HER BEFORE.
I'VE GOT NO MEMORY OF HER WHATSOEVER.
WHERE IS THIS STRANGE SENSE OF DÉJÀ VU COMING FROM?
MAYBE IT'S NOT A PROBLEM WITH HER. MAYBE IT'S ALL IN MY HEAD.
WHAT IS IT ABOUT A PETITE LITTLE FRESHMAN LIKE HER THAT'S SO DISTURBING...?
HONESTLY, I'M SURPRISED.

YEAH...
BUT THIS REALLY ISN'T AN EVERY-DAY OCCUR-RENCE.
SO SHE WAS PLAN-NING NOT TO LET ANYONE IN ALL ALONG! I KNEW IT!
HMM...
I WASN'T EXPECT-ING ANY OF THEM TO MAKE IT.
THAT'S WHY I MADE THE FINAL TEST A MARATHON.
AND THAT'S NOT ALL.
SHU (SHF)
IT'S QUITE A PHENOMENON, REALLY.
LET'S SEE HERE...
GU CLEAN
GU
GU
INCINERATED? THAT'S AWFUL
HERE
THIS IS THE SURVEY I GAVE OUT BEFORE.
I INCINERATED THE REST OF THEM AND ONLY KEPT HERS.

DON
COLUM
1. EXPLAIN THE REASONING BEHIND YOUR AMBITION TO JOIN THE SOS BRIGADE.
IT'S BEST TO STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT. I'M ALREADY IN LOVE WITH IT.
2. IF YOU ARE ADMITTED, IN WHAT WAY CAN YOU CONTRIBUTE?
ANYTHING I'M ALLOWED TO DO. I WILL TRY.
3. OF ALIENS, TIME TRAVELERS, SLIDERS, AND ESPERS, WHICH DO YOU THINK IS BEST?
I'D WANT TO TALK TO AN ALIEN THE MOST. I'D MOST WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH A TIME TRAVELER. AN ESPER SEEMS LIKE THEY'D BE THE MOST PROFITABLE. A SLIDER SEEMS LIKE THEY WOULD OPEN UP THE MOST POSSIBILITIES.
WHY?
I WROTE MY REASONING AS PART OF MY PREVIOUS ANSWER. SORRY.
SOS
5. EXPLAIN ANY MYSTERIOUS PHENOMENA YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED.
I HAVEN'T EXPERIENCED ANY. SORRY.
SOS
6. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PITHY PHRASE?
"UNPRECEDENTED AND UNBEATABLE".
7. IF YOU COULD DO ANYTHING, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?
BUILD A CITY ON MARS AND NAME IT AFTER MYSELF. LIKE "WASHINGTON, D.C." HEH.
8. FINAL QUESTION: EXPRESS YOUR ENTHUSIASM.
IF I ABSOLUTELY HAD TO, I'D PURPOSEFULLY MESS UP MY VISION AND WEAR GLASSES.
9. IF YOU CAN BRING ALONG ANYTHING REALLY INTERESTING, YOU GET EXTRA CREDIT.
PLEASE TRY TO FIND SOMETHING.
UNDERSTOOD. I'LL BRING SOMETHING SOON.

SO THAT'S THE KIND OF GIRL SHE IS.


YASUMI WATAHASHI, APPARENTLY.
WATARI... BASHI?
HOW'S THIS PRONOUNCED?

"IT'S ME, WATAHASHI." ATASHI WA, WATAHASHI.

WATA-HASHI... WATA...

"IT'S ME...?
"IT'S ME. M-E...? ATASHI WA...
...ME.." ...WATASHI.

SHE'D EXECUTED A PERFECT INFILTRATION.
WHY WOULD SHE CALL ME, SPECIFICALLY, OUT OF THE BLUE?
POPO
PON!!
WATAHASHI YASUMI.
THE PHONE CALL FROM BEFORE.
IT'S ME.
M-E, ME.
DOES THAT MEAN SOMETHING?
OR IS IT JUST A COINCIDENCE ...?
BUT KOIZUMI AND NAGATO HAVEN'T REACTED AT ALL.

ASIDE: HARUHI (KATAKANA), HARUHI (KANJI), HARUHI (HIRAGANA)

I DON'T KNOW THIS GIRL.
AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO FEELS SOMETHING AMISS IN THIS STRANGE DISHARMONY?
WHAT IS YASUMI WATAHASHI'S SECRET?

THE NEXT DAY, WEDNESDAY.
A DAY CONTAINING HARDLY ANYTHING, LEAVING ME FREE TO RUMINATE ...
...AS I DID THE ROUTINE WORK OF CLIMBING THE HILL TO SCHOOL.
β—9
KYON!
YOU'RE EVERY BIT THE PERSON I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN.
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT.
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT, KUNIKIDA?
AND WHY WOULD YOU FEEL THE NEED TO DELIVER THAT OPINION HERE AND NOW?
I JUST MEAN ...
...YOU AND I ARE THE SAME KIND OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT.

I FEEL BAD FOR TANIGUCHI SAYING THIS, BUT I KIND OF FELT LIKE I WANTED TO STAY AWAY FROM HER.
I STILL FEEL THAT WAY TOO.
BUT KUYOH-SAN'S DIF-FERENT.
I CAN'T IMAGINE ANYBODY WHO WOULDN'T LOOK AT KUYOH AND FEEL SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS.
WELL, NOT REALLY.
VERY PERCEPTIVE.
...MAYBE IT'S MY IMAGI-NATION ...
...BUT I GOT THE SAME FEELING ABOUT ASAHINA-SAN AND NAGATO-SAN.
SHE'S JUST NOT A REGULAR HUMAN.
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THAT'S GOOD OR BAD, THOUGH.
ALSO, TO BE HONEST...

I JUST WANTED TO SAY SOME-THING.
SORRY. ANYWAY, DON'T SWEAT IT.
IT'S PROBABLY NOT WORTH WORRYING ABOUT, THOUGH.
SINCE TSURUYA-SAN HANGS OUT WITH YOU GUYS PRETTY REGULARLY AND ALL...
IF THE SOS BRIGADE EVER NEEDS MY ASSISTANCE, I WANT YOU TO LET ME KNOW.
PREFERABLY WHEN TSURUYA-SAN'S ALONG.
I CAN'T HELP NOTING THAT HIS MENTION OF TSURUYA-SAN WAS QUITE INSIGHTFUL.
DID HE JUST WANT TO PROVIDE ME WITH A LITTLE BIT OF ADVICE?

WE LEFT IT WITH HER, AND WOULD PROBABLY NEED IT EVENTUALLY.
THAT MYSTERIOUS OBJECT WE DUG OUT OF HER FAMILY'S MOUNTAIN...
TSURUYA-SAN...
SHE'S THE MOST RELIABLE NORMAL HUMAN THERE IS.
BUT IT NEVER HURT TO HAVE AN EXTRA TRUMP CARD.
WHO KNEW WHAT IT WAS FOR.
WHOSE DOING IS THIS?
THE INSTINCTS OF THE PEOPLE AROUND ME SEEM TO BE GETTING SHARPER.
HE MIGHT SOON BE ELEVATED OUT OF "RANDOM CLASSMATE" STATUS IN HARUHI'S MIND.
AND KUNIKIDA HIMSELF WAS RATHER PERCEPTIVE.

ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH THE TERM GNOSTICISM?
PAN (SMACK)
I DON'T EVEN UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMMUNISM AND SOCIALISM.
NOT AT ALL.
SHU (WSHH)
YOU CAN THINK OF IT AS A PHILOSOPHY, OR PERHAPS A RELIGION.
HA HA...
YOU PROBABLY SHOULD.
JUST FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

BUT IT WAS WELL-ESTABLISHED BY THE TIME CHRISTIANITY WAS CREATED.
OF COURSE, THESE DAYS IT'S CONSIDERED COMPLETELY HERETICAL.
PAN

WHY WAS THE WORLD SO FULL OF POINTLESS SUFFERING?

PEOPLE IN ANCIENT TIMES THOUGHT THUS:
THE WORLD IS FILLED WITH WICKED-NESS.

...THEN JUST LEAVE IT ALONE?
SHU (SHWP)
SHUDDUP!
WHY WOULD GOD HAVE CREATED SUCH A TERRIBLE WORLD ...
PAN

"THE WORLD WAS NOT CREATED BY A BENE-VOLENT CREATOR ...
HE PROBABLY REALIZED HIS GAME WAS ON THE PATH TO THE BAD ENDING, SO HE GAVE UP.
QUITE POSSIBLY.
BUT COULDN'T WE THINK ABOUT IT THIS WAY?
SHU (WHISH)
"....BUT INSTEAD, A MALICIOUS ONE."
IT AMOUNTS TO THE SAME THING, DOESN'T IT?
PAN (SMACK)
IF THE BLUEPRINTS ARE BAD, THE BUILDING IS GOING TO BE BAD TOO.

IF THE WORLD WERE ENTIRELY EVIL WITHOUT ANY GOOD ANYWHERE, WE WOULDN'T EVEN BE ABLE TO CONCEIVE OF GOODNESS.
THE FACT THAT WE CAN RECOGNIZE EVIL FOR WHAT IT IS PROVES THAT WE CAN RESIST IT WITH GOOD.
WHY, YOU ASK?
HOWEVER, HUMANS ARE NOT ENTIRELY EVIL.
IT IS HARDLY SURPRISING THAT GOD OVERLOOKS EVIL ACTS... BECAUSE GOD HIMSELF IS EVIL.

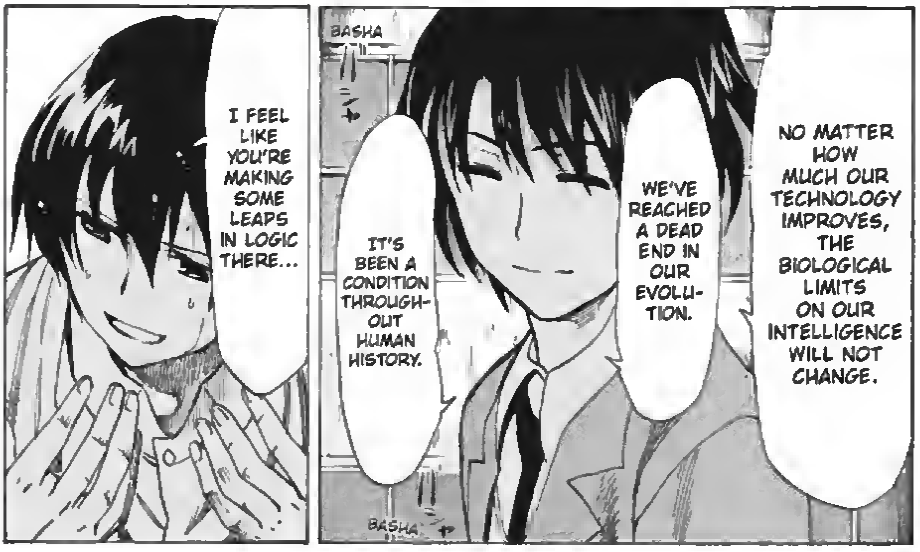
...BUT WATCHES OVER IT FROM OUTSIDE ...
IN OTHER WORDS, GOD DOES NOT EXIST IN THE WORLD...

...WAS THE SINGLE RAY OF LIGHT THAT SHONE IN FROM NONE OTHER THAN THE TRUE GOD, WHO STILL EXISTED SOMEWHERE.
AND BELIEVED THAT THEIR ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE THAT FACT...

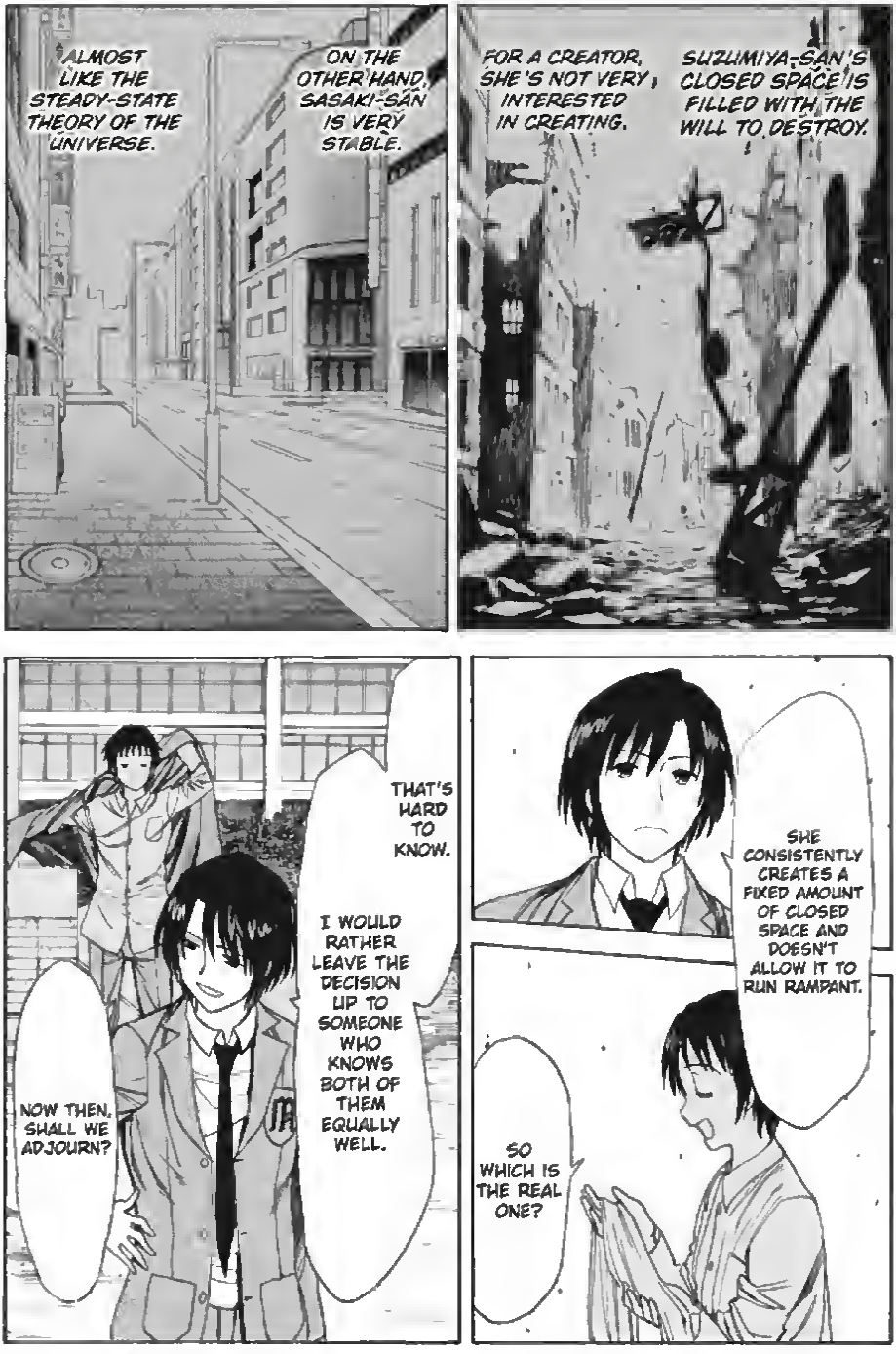
SO THE ANCIENTS BELIEVED THE WORLD WAS CREATED BY A FALSE GOD.

KYU (SQUEAK)
キュッ
WELL, THEY'D HAVE TO THINK THAT. OTHERWISE WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT?
INDEED.
AND BECAUSE THIS TRADITION HOLDS THE CREATOR OF THE WORLD TO BE A FAKE, IT'S BEEN UNDERSTANDABLY SUPPRESSED.

BASHA (SPLASH)
INCIDENTALLY...
...GNOSTICISM IS GENERALLY IN ACCORD WITH MODERN THINKING.
BASHA
BASHA
HUMAN PSYCHOLOGY HAS NOT CHANGED APPRECIABLY SINCE ANCIENT TIMES.

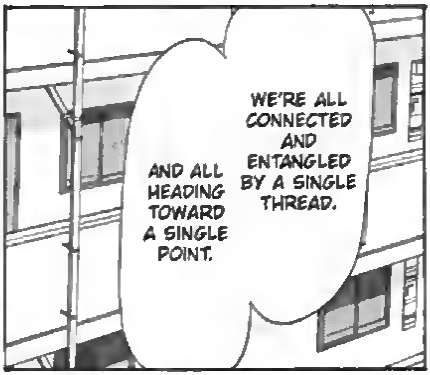

BASHA
NO MATTER HOW MUCH OUR TECHNOLOGY IMPROVES, THE BIOLOGICAL LIMITS ON OUR INTELLIGENCE WILL NOT CHANGE.
WE'VE REACHED A DEAD END IN OUR EVOLUTION.
IT'S BEEN A CONDITION THROUGHOUT HUMAN HISTORY.
BASHA
I FEEL LIKE YOU'RE MAKING SOME LEAPS IN LOGIC THERE...

NOW, WITH THAT AS OUR CONTEXT ...
TACHIBANA-SAN'S FACTION REGARDS SUZUMIYA AS A FALSE GOD.
SHE MAY WELL BE THE CREATOR OF THIS WORLD.
BUT SHE LACKS SELF-AWARENESS ...
...WHICH NECESSARILY PREVENTS HER FROM BEING THE TRUE GOD.
AND NOW THEY'VE FOUND SOMEONE THEY CAN BELIEVE IS THE TRUE GOD.
ALTHOUGH IT'S POSSIBLE THEY ONLY THINK THEY'VE FOUND HER.


ALMOST LIKE THE STEADY-STATE THEORY OF THE UNIVERSE.
ON THE OTHER HAND, SASAKI-SAN IS VERY STABLE.
FOR A CREATOR, SHE'S NOT VERY INTERESTED IN CREATING.
SUZUMIYA-SAN'S CLOSED SPACE IS FILLED WITH THE WILL TO DESTROY.
THAT'S HARD TO KNOW.
I WOULD RATHER LEAVE THE DECISION UP TO SOMEONE WHO KNOWS BOTH OF THEM EQUALLY WELL.
NOW THEN, SHALL WE ADJOURN?
SHE CONSISTENTLY CREATES A FIXED AMOUNT OF CLOSED SPACE AND DOESN'T ALLOW IT TO RUN RAMPANT.
SO WHICH IS THE REAL ONE?

NAGATO-SAN AND KUYOH-SAN.
ASAHINA-SAN AND FUJIWARA THE TIME TRAVELER.
THE AGENCY AND KYOKO TACHI-BANA'S GROUP.
AND YOU AND SASAKI-SAN...

SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN THERE...


WE'RE ALL CONNECTED AND ENTANGLED BY A SINGLE THREAD.
AND ALL HEADING TOWARD A SINGLE POINT.

AND WHEN THAT TIME COMES, I'M SURE YOU'LL UNDERSTAND IMMEDIATELY.
YOU NEED ONLY ACT ACCORDING TO YOUR OWN WILL.
SO FAR YOUR ACTIONS HAVE ALL BEEN RIGHT.
AND I BELIEVE THE NEXT TIME WILL BE THE SAME.

TO (TAP)
HEY, WHOSE LOAFERS ARE...
!
TA (TAP)
WELCOME HOME!
I'M HOME.

DID YOU KNOW ...?
I READ IT IN AN ESSAY SOMEWHERE ...
HEY.
CAT PERSONALITIES ARE HIT-OR-MISS...
...COMPLETELY IRRESPECTIVE OF LINEAGE OR BREED.

HEY.
NICE CAT.

HA HA...
SO FAR AS I CAN TELL, YOU REALLY HIT ON A GREAT CAT WITH SHAMISEN HERE.
HE'S GOT A CERTAIN CLEVERNESS ABOUT HIM, AND A CERTAIN WILDNESS.
なでり
NADERI (PET)
IT MAKES YOU WONDER IF HE UNDERSTANDS HUMANS BETTER THAN EVEN A CHILD WOULD.
YOU'RE NOT JUST LUCKY FOR OWNING A MALE CALICO.
CATS THINK OF HUMANS AS JUST BEING SLIGHTLY LARGER CATS.
THAT'S WHY THEY DON'T SHOW US ANY DEFERENCE.
とっ TO
とっ TO
WAAH!
YOU'VE GOT IT BACKWARDS, KYON.
HE DOESN'T EVEN THINK OF HIMSELF AS A CAT.
SOMETIMES HE ACTS LIKE HE THINKS HE'S SUPERIOR TO HUMANS.
SHU (WSH)

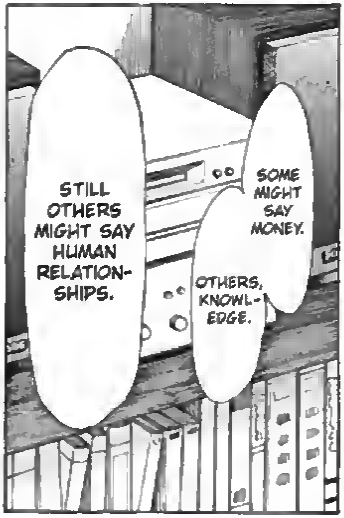
OKAY, OUT.
SHOO!
AWW!
HMPH
DOGS PROBABLY THINK OF THEMSELVES AS BEING THE SAME SPECIES AS HUMANS.
THAT'S WHY THEY'RE FAITHFUL TO THEIR MASTERS.
FU FU
WWAH!
THEY JUST THINK OF US AS BEING KIND OF CLUMSY.
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO CATCH OUR OWN FOOD.
THEY'RE DIFFERENT FROM DOGS IN THAT WAY.
AT LEAST TO THE FRONT DOOR.
HEE HEE HEE!
YOU USED TO BRING HER OVER ALL THE TIME.
BUT I'VE BEEN HAVING FUN!
YOU MEANIE!
OR PERHAPS I SHOULD SAY SHE'S A LOVELY GIRL.
SHE'S DEFINITELY YOUR SISTER, KYON.
I'M SURE IT'S BECAUSE SHE'S HAD A GOOD HOME.
FU FU FU!
I'M HAPPY YOU REMEMBER.
KIDS SURE DO GROW UP QUICKLY.

I WAS THINKING YOU MUST BE GETTING PRETTY CLOSE TO YOUR LIMIT.
OH, THIS AND THAT.
SO.
WHAT IS IT YOU CAME TO TALK TO ME ABOUT?
...SO LET'S GET TO THE POINT.
BECAUSE IN THE PREVIOUS MEETING THERE WERE TOO MANY INTERFERING VOICES...
...THE DATA OVERMIND AND THE HEAVENLY CANOPY DOMAIN ARE FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FROM THE ALIENS HUMANITY HAS IMAGINED.
BUT...
...I'VE IMAGINED WHAT EXTRATER-RESTRIAL LIFE WOULD LOOK LIKE, IF IT EXISTED.
EVER SINCE I WAS A KID...
FIRST, I'LL TELL WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT KUYOH SUOH-SAN.

WHAT I THINK IS THAT THEY ARE UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND HUMAN REASONING AND VALUES.

WHAT ...?
HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO ANSWER THAT ON THE SPOT?

WHAT'S THE MOST PRECIOUS THING IN THE WORLD TO YOU?
FOR EXAMPLE, KYON.


SOME MIGHT SAY MONEY.
OTHERS, KNOWL-EDGE.
STILL OTHERS MIGHT SAY HUMAN RELATION-SHIPS.

IN THIS SOCIETY OF COMPLEX, RAPID INFORMATION, NO ONE EVER QUANTIFIES THEIR VALUE SYSTEMS.
IT'S TRUE. I COULDN'T DO IT EITHER.

BUT I DON'T THINK PEOPLE IN THE PAST WOULD'VE HAD TO THINK SO MUCH ABOUT THAT QUESTION.
THEIR ANSWERS WERE MUCH MORE LIMITED.
HERE AN INEVITABLE QUESTION ARISES.
WHEN THERE ARE TOO MANY OPTIONS, PEOPLE DON'T KNOW WHICH CHOICE TO TAKE...?
THAT'S EXACTLY RIGHT, KYON.
DIVERSIFICATION MAKES CHOICE DIFFICULT.
PI (FLICK)
WHEN THEY HAVE TO CHOOSE WITHOUT ANY INFORMATION, PEOPLE CHOOSE ACCORDING TO THE MAJORITY.
BUT THAT'S GETTING IT EXACTLY BACKWARDS.
FAR FROM DIVERSIFICATION, THIS LEADS TO CONCENTRATION AND HOMOGENIZATION.

SEEMS LIKE THE ALIENS HAVE PRIVILEGED THE EVOLUTION OF HOMOGENEITY...
...BUT THEY'VE REALIZED THERE'S ANOTHER SIDE.
AND THAT HARUHI SUZUMIYA-SAN IS THE KEY.

SO WHAT SHOULD I DO?
LET'S THINK ABOUT THAT.
FORTUNATELY, FUJIWARA-KUN AND TACHIBANA-SAN, AND EVEN KUYOH-SAN, CAN ALL UNDERSTAND OUR LANGUAGE.

I CAN'T IMAGINE AN AVERAGE HIGH SCHOOLER LIKE ME CAN DO MUCH, THOUGH.

LANGUAGE... AND THOUGHT. THESE ARE OUR BIGGEST WEAPONS.
THEY'RE UNIVERSAL ABILITIES ALL HUMANITY POSSESSES.

ADULTS WOULD ONLY GET IN OUR WAY WITH ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATIONS, AND POINTLESS MEETINGS.
LISTEN, KYON.
THIS STORY BELONGS TO YOU AND ME.
THAT'S NO PROBLEM AT ALL.
YOU SEE, THESE MATTERS REVOLVE AROUND HARUHI SUZUMIYA.
AND THAT'S THE WEAKNESS WE CAN USE.
AND ABOUT THAT TIME TRAVELER ...
THIS IS EARTH, SO THE ALIENS HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO MOVE ON AN EARTH-SCALE LEVEL.
THE SAME IS TRUE OF THE TIME TRAVELERS.
AND I THINK THAT MIGHT BE OUR OPENING.
THAT GUY.
I GET THE SENSE HE WANTS TO WRAP THINGS UP PRETTY QUICKLY.
HE'S BEEN VERY CLEAR ABOUT HIS WILLINGNESS TO PURSUE HIS GOALS.

OH, BROTHER.
BUT YOU'D PREFER THAT YOURSELF, WOULDN'T YOU?
YOU NEED TO BRING DOWN NAGATO-SAN'S FEVER AND ALL.

HE'LL TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS TOMORROW.

THIS IS A TOTAL GUESS ON MY PART...

...BUT THE PROBLEM THAT WE'RE FACING MAY BE TO SIMPLY PROVE OUR REASON FOR EXISTENCE.

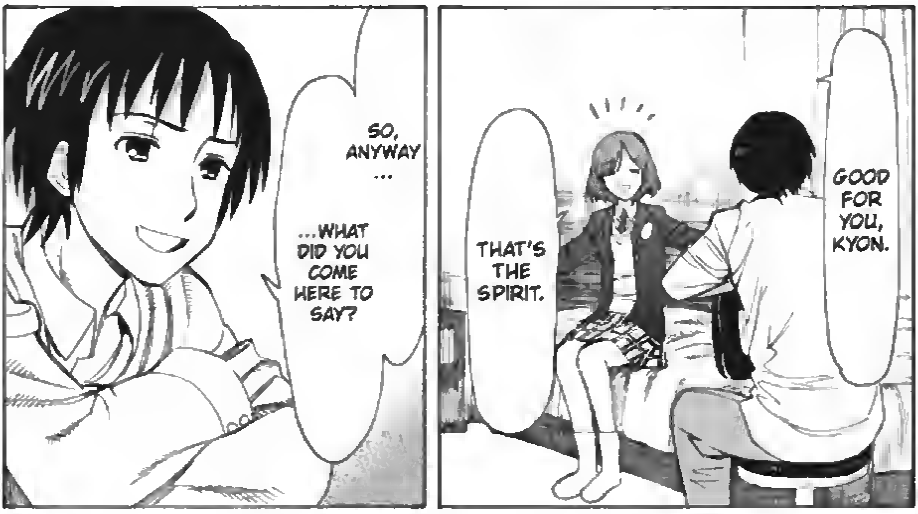
...BECAUSE THEY'RE TRYING TO MAKE THEIR RAISON D'ÊTRE INTO REALITY.
IT'S POSSIBLE THAT EVERYONE IS WORKING SO HARD...

EACH OF THEM EXIST ON THEIR OWN...
...AND TRY TO GET ANOTHER BEING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR EXISTENCE.
THEY'RE ALL TAKING ACTION WITH THAT SIMPLE GOAL IN MIND.
THEY HAVE BUT A SINGLE WISH.
A SINGLE PLAINTIVE HOPE: "DON'T FORGET ABOUT US."

"I AM HERE."

NOT THEM... OR ANYONE, REALLY.
...I DON'T GET IT.

WHEN I TALK WITH YOU, I ALWAYS WIND UP WITH MY FACE STUCK IN A SMILE.
I THOUGHT I'D TRY BEING A LITTLE MORE SERIOUS FOR ONCE.
HOW'D IT GO?
I FEEL LIKE I SHOULD APOLOGIZE FOR GETTING YOU WRAPPED UP IN ALL OF THIS...
...BUT I'VE HARDLY EVER SEEN AN EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE THAT WASN'T A SMILE.
SO I DON'T THINK I'M GOING TO PAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO THAT.


GOOD FOR YOU, KYON.
THAT'S THE SPIRIT.
SO, ANYWAY ...
...WHAT DID YOU COME HERE TO SAY?

I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU IN PERSON.
THAT'S ALL. WHY DO YOU ASK?
NO REASON.
IF I'M THE GUY YOU WANT, I'LL GO ALONG WITH YOU.
NEVER KNOW WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN.
SHE'S A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK.
GIRLS ARE A HANDFUL... OR MAYBE THAT DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT.
KYON-KUN, AND SASAKI-ONEESAN...
..HAVE KIND OF A WEIRD VIBE.

THE SURPRISE OF HARUHI SUZUMIYA VII : END

The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya